

Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grants (EECBG)

Competitive Local Government Sub-Grants

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

General Clarification: The RFP states that eligible “units of local government” include cities, towns, town school districts, incorporated schools, and incorporated villages” as defined in Vermont Statute 1 V.S.A. § 126. We have been informed by the VT Department of Education that there are no public “incorporated schools” in Vermont, only “incorporated school districts”. Therefore town school districts and incorporated school districts are both eligible applicants.

- *Are school districts within a town that received direct EECBG funds from DOE eligible for this RFP?*

Yes, as stated in the first paragraph of the RFP, school districts within the towns/cities that received direct funding are eligible.

- *Are towns within a county that received direct EECBG funds from DOE eligible for this RFP?*

Yes.

- *Are private schools eligible to apply?*

No. Only public school districts and incorporated school districts are eligible.

- *Are Fire Districts eligible to apply?*

No. Only cities, towns, public school districts, incorporated school districts, and incorporated villages are eligible.

- *Can a supervisory union be an applicant?*

No. Only public school districts and incorporated school districts are eligible.

- *Can multiple towns, or school districts submit one application?*

No, only a single entity can submit a proposal for projects in their town or school district.

- ***When will grants be awarded?***

March, 2010. Grant agreements should be in place by May, 2010.

- ***Can entities submit more than one proposal per category?***

No, entities can only submit one proposal per category requesting up to the maximum category amount. The one proposal could contain multiple projects, for example energy efficiency retrofits on two separate buildings. Entities can submit multiple proposals in different categories for up to a total of \$100,000.

- ***Is there a limit to the number of grant applications an applicant can submit?***

Applicants can only submit one application per category, but can submit multiple applications in different categories as long as the total requested amount for all applications is not more than \$100,000. So entities could submit an application for all five categories as long as the total requested amount is not more than \$100,000.

- ***Can entities apply for the maximum under the Financial Incentive Program (\$250,000) and still apply for another category?***

If entities submit a proposal for over \$100,000 up to the maximum amount in the Financial Incentive Program category, they can not submit a proposal for another category as they have exceeded the \$100,000 limit. They could submit a proposal for an amount under \$100,000 (for example \$50,000) under the Financial Incentive Program category and submit a second proposal for up to \$50,000 in another category.

- ***Do you apply as a school or as a district?***

Only school districts are eligible to apply, but they can include multiple schools in those applications.

- ***Are other efficiency measures not specifically listed under the “Energy Efficiency Retrofit” category (such as an air lock entrance) eligible for funding?***

No. Only the specific measures listed (installation of insulation; installation of efficient lighting; heating, venting, and air conditioning (HVAC) and high-efficiency shower/faucet upgrades; weather sealing; the purchase and installation of ENERGY STAR appliances (including boilers and furnaces); installation of solar powered or conventional garbage compactors with improved efficiency; and replacement of windows and doors) are eligible for funding.

- ***Are other renewable energy systems not specifically listed under the “Renewable Energy Technologies” category eligible for funding?***

No. Only the specific measures listed (Geothermal Heat Pumps (5.5-ton capacity or smaller horizontal closed loop); Biomass Boilers (3 MMBTUs or smaller with appropriate Best Available Control Technologies (BACT) installed and operated); and Combined Heat and Power Systems (boilers sized appropriately for the existing building in which they are located) are eligible for funding.

- ***Are other projects not specifically listed under the “Implementation of Transportation Programs” category eligible for funding?***

They may be, applicants should contact Kelly Launder at kelly.launder@state.vt.us or 802-828-4039 to check. Because these project category descriptions are developed by the U.S. Department of Energy we may have to check with them to see if a particular project would be eligible. So be aware it may take some time to get back to applicants on whether something not on the list would be eligible. Typically any project not involving construction or purchase of equipment would be eligible, but applicants should contact us for approval prior to applying. For example, the acquisition and use of route optimization software for school bus routes would be eligible.

- ***What if an applicant can't complete an energy audit prior to the December 8 application deadline?***

As stated in the RFP, we are not asking for energy audits for the Initial Application, which is due Dec 8th, we are just asking if one has been completed (if it's scheduled or planned they should indicate that). Energy audits would be submitted with a Comprehensive Application, which is due February 23.

- *If you need to have engineering or design work ahead of time, can you include this design work in the project?*

No.

- *The preliminary application asks you to list contractors. What if you don't have a contractor yet?*

If an applicant hasn't yet selected sub contractors they should list all the parts of the projects that will be subcontracted out, whether they will be selected on a bid process, and what qualifications they will require for the work.

- *Is a competitive bid process required for hiring sub contractors?*

No.

- *Would parking lot lights qualify for funding?*

Yes, they are eligible under the "Traffic Signals and Street Lighting" category if energy efficient lighting, such as light emitting diodes, are being installed.

- *Would flood lights on a building qualify for funding?*

Yes, they are eligible under the "Traffic Signals and Street Lighting" category if existing flood lights are being replaced with energy efficient lighting, such as light emitting diodes.

- *Would solar-powered LED parking lot lights qualify for funding?*

Under the Traffic Signal and Street Lighting category (which parking lot light projects would also fall under) the RFP states that "Entities may use grant funds to replace traffic signals and street lighting with energy efficient lighting technologies, including light emitting diodes; **and any other technology of equal or greater energy efficiency**". If a solar powered LED parking lot light would meet this criteria it would be eligible.

- *If only part of your building is more than 50 years old and if the work to be done is on the newer part, do you still have to go through historic preservation?*

You would need to contact the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation to get an answer on this at: (802) 828-3211

- ***Can you explain in-kind match? Can consultants used be in the in-kind match?***

For this grant solicitation, applicants' time/labor committed to the project is considered in-kind match. Subcontractors/third party donated labor/services, equipment, and materials would also be considered in-kind match.

- ***How do I handle different applications in different categories?***

Each application for each category should be a separate stand-alone application.

- ***Can you explain who gets to apply for Comprehensive Grants?***

The Initial Applications will be reviewed and scored and a select number of applicants will be invited to submit Comprehensive Applications.

- ***Does each school need a DUNS number?***

Each applicant will need a DUNS number. The VT Department of Education has informed me that currently all school districts already have a DUNS number.

- ***Do Clean Energy Assessment Districts fit within the "Financial Incentive Programs" category? Can you provide more information on this category?***

Yes I believe the Clean Energy Assessment Districts would fit in this category. The program categories were developed by DOE so I don't have a lot of specifics on what could be included. There is some information on the federal EECBG website at:

http://www.eecbg.energy.gov/solutioncenter/eligibleactivities/Activity_4.html
on the Financial Incentive Program category.

- ***Most local governments vote on their budget on town meeting day. They cannot simply allocate funds to match EECBG money without first putting it in their budget and allowing the townspeople to vote on the matter. How can this be resolved?***

If a town has pending match dollars that need to be voted on they can include it in the budget and state that it's pending with a vote required by town residents in March.

- *Is there any set distribution of the \$4.8MM in the different categories?*

We don't have any predefined amounts that will be allocated to each category.